



# Mountain Pine Beetle Forum

~~~~~ Sharing information about Montana's Challenge ~~~~~

As Montana's mountain pine beetle outbreak continues, tree mortality is becoming more apparent resulting in drastically altered landscapes in many areas of the state. As the impacts become more obvious to the public, increasing questions arise about both long and short-term implications. Key issues identified by repeated inquiries by private landowners include:

- Implications for forest health;
- Implications for wildfires and interface communities;
- Implications for Montana's economy

There is a continued and escalating need for public education, outreach and information related to the state's response to mountain pine beetle. All land management agencies must continue to work together to provide consistent information about the beetles and clear communication regarding agency response related to forest health, wildfires and the forest products industry.

The Mountain Pine Beetle Forum is an attempt to ensure that we are still sharing information and are developing new strategies to keep the public informed about state response, maintain top-of-mind awareness about the continuing MPB outbreak, and ensure that education campaigns are achieving the intended results.

The Forum, comprised of representatives from land management agencies and other stakeholders can – through efforts to collaborate on MPB issues – continue to raise awareness about MPB and promote access to current, accurate information.

As proposed, the Forum is simply a group of partners with common challenges and the desire to collaborate on solution – not to the MBP outbreak, but to the collateral challenges of public information and education. Group structure, frequency of meetings, products and even how long the group should exist are all items which should be determined by Forum members.

***Benefits of a group such as MPB Forum:***

***Information sharing regarding beetle activity and mortality across ownerships.***

***Collaboration on public information products and activities.***

***Opportunity to learn about impacts from a variety of groups (i.e. ski areas, tourism)***

***Possible press and community open houses in conjunction with Forum meetings.***

***Keeping MPB in front of decision makers and the public***

